SARL NEWS SUNDAY 23 MARCH 2008

You are listening to ZS6SRL the official Radio Station of the South African Radio League, the National Body for Amateur Radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin that is transmitted every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ARMI and follow the links for details. PLEASE NOTE! For audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this and previous bulletins from www.sarl.org.za and you can also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by email.

Your newsreader this morning is Hans, ZS6KR, on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria with relays on 28,325, 14,235, 10,130, 7,066 and 3,695 MHz SSB as well as 51,400, 438,825 and 1 296 MHz FM in the Pretoria area. (Other newsreaders please change to suit).

In today's SARL News:

SIR ARTHUR C CLARKE - SILENT KEY

MARION ISLAND TO BE ACTIVATED

HOLIDAY BEACON COMPETITION RESULTS

7P8FC DXPEDITION

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more detail on these and other important and interesting news items.

SIR ARTHUR C CLARKE - SILENT KEY

Science fiction writer and visionary Sir Arthur C. Clarke died on 19 March 2008 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, at the age of 90.

People worldwide will remember Sir Arthur for making popular the concept of using satellites in geostationary orbit for communications. In October 1945, Clarke published in the British magazine Wireless World a technical paper entitled "Extra-terrestrial Relays - Can Rocket Stations Give World-wide Radio Coverage?" The paper established the feasibility of artificial satellites as relay stations for Earth-based communications. Clarke predicted that one-day communications around the world would be possible via a network of three geostationary satellites spaced at equal intervals around the Earth's equator.

Nearly two decades later, in 1964, Syncom 3 became the first geostationary satellite to finally fulfil Clarke's prediction. Later that year, Syncom 3 was used to relay television coverage of the Summer Olympic Games in Tokyo to the United States - the first television transmission over the Pacific Ocean. In 1954, Clarke had also proposed using satellites in meteorology. Today, we cannot imagine predicting the weather without using dedicated meteorological satellites.

Arthur C Clarke was the inspiration for William Orr, a well-known author of Amateur Radio articles and books who talked about amateur repeaterS in the

sky years before the first OSCAR was launched.

ZS6GCM TO ACTIVATE ZS8T ON MARION ISLAND

Hardly having touched soil in South Africa after his trip to Bouvet Island Petrus Kritzinger, ZS6GCM, is on his way to Marion Island and will be operating as ZS8T to woo the world's DXers. Petrus will be active on 160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 12 and 10 metres using SSB, CW and RTTY. He expects to start operation in May 2008 depending on his work load on the island

Listen to an exclusive interview with Petrus on Amateur Radio Mirror International today at 10:00 CAT on 7 082, 7 205 or 17 570 kHz. Visit the DXpedition website for more information and regular updates. Click on the link on www.sarl.org.za.

HOLIDAY BEACON COMPETITION RESULTS SHOW INTERESTING PROPAGATION PATTERNS

While few entries were received in the SARL - HMO Holiday Beacon Competition, interesting propagation patterns were seen.

The winner of the 2007 ARRL Handbook is Joop Hesp, ZS6C. He decoded the three messages correctly. He received ZS6SRL at 09:40, ZS2LAW at 18:04 and ZS1HMO at 18:55. As darkness approached at his QTH west of Johannesburg, the path slowly opened more southwards. Signals were however very weak.

The DX handbook was won by Bruce Rowan, ZS6BK. While on holiday at Mabula Game Lodge on 23 January 2008 he received ZS6SRL at 12:21 with a signal of 559. He was using an Icom-703 connected to a half size G5RV antenna.

Thanks to all who sent in reports and congratulations to the winners.

SARL-HMO BEACON PROJECT MOVING AHEAD

After testing six beacons the team is implementing various changes from the lessons learned. The role out of the 22 beacons in the initial programme will commence in early April through to end July when it is expected that all beacons will be installed.

After that, the team will be testing a digital receiver tuned to the 7 023 beacon frequency. The receiver will monitor the beacons and store the information for later download to a PC.

A detailed report is available on www.sarl.org.za. It makeS fascinating reading as John Willescroft and Lee-Anne McKinnell take you through the testing and development process.

SARL NATIONAL CONVENTION - DON'T MISS THE AMATEUR RADIO EVENT OF THE YEAR

The SARL Convention is taking on the buzz of annual SARL events of the sixties and seventies when people travelled the country to take part in the SARL AGM and all the events around the meeting. This is the first time in this new

century that the SARL is holding a National Convention as part of the AGM and you cannot afford to miss it. The convention starts on Friday 11 April with a visit to the Boyden Observatory to be taking on a journey through the stars by the Astronomical Society. On Saturday morning is the AGM and a visit to the historical farm Onze Rust starts the early evening with Dinner in the restaurant next to the homestead where President M T Steyn lived at the turn of the previous century. On Sunday, breakfast is enjoyed at the ZS9X contest station with breathtaking views of the Free State plains and if you linger to take some photographs, you can be part of a live broadcast of Amateur Radio Mirror International.

If you have not already booked, visit www.sarl.org.za and download a full programme and registration forms or send an e-mail to zs4bs@netactive.co.za. Do it now, otherwise you will regret not being part of the event. To date the organising committee has only received 8 booking forms. The closing date is Sunday 6 April 2008.

BACAR 2008 PROJECT MOVING AHEAD

The various payloads are at an advanced stage of construction and will be tested at the next BACAR meeting to be held at the SARL National Amateur Radio Centre on 5 April 2008 at 11:00. Join a tracking team or come and see how the payload is being tested. Get some hands-on Amateur Radio experience. You can read more about BACAR on www.amsatsa.org.za.

CONSTRUCTION COMPETITION WITH A DIFFERENCE

This year the SA Amateur Radio Development Trust construction competition is different from previous ones. You are invited to enter by sending in your ideas for a construction project. The project must have application in the radio shack and cost less then R500 to build. The judges will select three projects to be entered into the second and final leg of the competition. The three stage-one winners will receive funding to develop and build the project, which must be submitted as a working model together with all the paper work. The overall winner will receive an Icom D-star Transceiver with the compliments of Multisource Telecommunications.

The closing date is 31 March for stage one. Visit www.amateurradio.org.za for an entry form and full details of the competition.

HAMNET AND ARRIVE ALIVE TO WORK TOGETHER OVER THE EASTER PERIOD

Johan, ZS5JL, an Arrive Alive registered monitor will be monitoring the IARU Reg 1 emergency frequencies for Hamnet and the Arrive Alive project of the Dept of Transport during the Easter holiday period. Johan will be in direct contact with the Arrive Alive Operational Centre. If you are on the air, report in with any incident. The more eyes the safer the Easter weekend.

7P8FC DXPEDITION

Members of the Secunda Amateur Radio Club and two Belgium operators will be active from the Katse Dam in Lesotho from 27 March to 3 April 2008. This includes participation in the CQ WPX Phone Contest. They will be using the call sign 7P8FC and will be active using SSB, RTTY and PSK on 160, 80, 40, 20, 17, 15, 12 and 10 metres. The QSL manager is ON4CJK. Further information is available at www.7p8fc.be/index.htm.

SA AMSAT SPACE SYMPOSIUM

This is reminder that the early bird registration for the SA AMSAT Space Symposium to be held in Durban on 19 April is fast running out. Get details from www.amsatsa.org.za or drop a mail to saamsat@intekom.co.za.

NO PRESIDENT S NET AND INTECNET THIS MONTH

With all the holidays during March there will be no President s Net and Intecnet this month. The next President s Net and Intecnet will be later in April. Watch SARL news for the date.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the expected solar activity will be very low. The geomagnetic field is expected to be mostly quiet. The expected Effective Sun Spot number for the coming week will be less than 5. DX conditions will generally be good on the Northeast and poor in the general Northerly directions.

15 m and 20 m will provide best opportunities for DX. There is a possibility of 15 and 20 m openings towards India from about 14:00 CAT. There may be short, weak 20 m openings to Australia from 08:00. From 16:00, there may be 15 and 20 m openings towards Europe. At 19:00, there may be short, weak 15 m openings to the USA. Otherwise, contacts with the USA are going to be very challenging. 10 MHz is looking promising after dark for the CW and digital enthusiasts.

Local conditions are going to be good on 40 m during the daytime. 30 m may perform well during the middle of the day over the longer distances. 80 m is the frequency of choice in the evenings, thunderstorms and static permitting! Remember that this is only a prediction and that HF always has the capability to surprise you, but you will never know unless you switch your rig on, listen and also call CQ.

Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

27 March to 3 April 7P8FC DXpedition; 31 March - Closing date for first stage of 2008 construction competition; and Closing date for nominations for the Tinus Lange awards; 3 April - SARL 80 Metre QSO Party; 6 April - Last day for attendance booking for SARL AGM; 11 to 13 April - SARL AGM in Bloemfontein; 12 April - Kempton Park ARC RAE classes commence; 15 April

- Overberg ARC AGM; 19 April - SA Amsat 2008 Space Communication; 21 April Closing date Nokia Siemens Network Awards.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news stories of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news stories if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to the programme Amateur Radio Mirror International, on the air every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 590 kHz. For the web stream and Echolink by ZS0JPL-R visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ARMI and follow the links. A repeat transmission can be heard Mondays at 21:00 CAT on 3 215 kHz. Sentech sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

Dennis, ZS4BS, compiled today's South African Radio League news bulletin.

Thank you for listening. 73.

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